THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) Certain exemptions with respect to customs and excise duties are available uniformly to public funded research institutions or a university or a non-commercial research institutions other than a hospital. Similarly direct tax concessions are available in respect of institutions engaged in research including medical research. Fiscal concessions, with respect to both direct or indirect taxes, are not confined to private institutions only.

(b) A number of direct tax concessions are available to the institutions which are engaged in the field of medical research as well as the institutions engaged in providing simple health care and related medical activities. These concessions are available subject to fulfilment of necessary conditions and safeguards. Exemption from customs and excise duties is available to the import or purchase of scientific apparatus, equipment and consumables, by public funded research institutions and non-commercial research institutions, other than hospitals, subject to certain conditions.

(c) In view of the reply to (a) and (b) above, the question of taking steps against private profiteering does not arise.

News-item regarding protest against delay in Adoption of recommendations of Pay Commission

4301. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item in the Tribune, dated the 23rd April, 1997 regarding a dharna by about 3000 Central Government employees in protest against the inordinate delay in the adoption of the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission.

(b) whether it is a fact that Government have constituted three different committees to go into the different recommendations made by the Commission;

(c) if so, whether they have since submitted their reports in the matter; and

(d) if so, the reasons for the delay in accepting the various recommendations made by the Commission and by when Government are likely to accept them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Government has set up only one Committee viz Empowered Committee to scrutnise and obtain orders of the Government on the various recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission. There has been no delay in consideration of the Report of the Pay Commission. In accordance with the established procedure, the recommendations are required to be scrutinised by an Empowered Committee, which has already met four times. The views of the Staff Side are also required to be ascertained. A meeting has been held with them. The report is being processed further. The Government is taking steps that decisions are taken soon.

Computerisation of SBI

4302. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Bank of India is now gearing up to fully computerise its branches;

(b) if so, the total capital cost of the project;

(c) the amount of business generated per employee prior to computerisation and the estimated business per employees to be generated post-computerisation; and

(d) what other parameters would be

considered to evaluate improvement in efficiency of the Bank, after incurring this huge cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) State Bank of India (SBI) have reported that as at the end of March 1997, the bank had fully computerised 670 branches. The current plan is to fully computerise another 700 branches by March, 1998.

(b) According to SBI, per branch cost of computerisation works out on an average to Rs. 20 lakhs inclusive of UPS, airconditioning, etc.

(c) As reported by SBI, the data relatinig to business per employee prior to computerisation and the estimated business per employee post computerisation are as under:
Prior to
computerisation —Rs. 51 lacs (Prov.)
Post computerisation—Rs. 73 lacs (Prov.)

(d) According to SBI, the other parameters to be considered to evaluate the improvement in efficiency of the Bank after incurring the cost on computersiation are as under:

(i) Reduction in customer complaints.

(ii) Change in customers perception of services rendered.

(iii) Reduction in queuing time and overcrowding in the branch.

(iv) Improvement in efficiency rating by the inspecting officials.

(v) Improvement in house keeping.

विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार का उपयोग किया जाना

4303. **श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी:** क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) इस समय भारत का विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार कितना है और इसमें भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक द्वारा भारतीय रुपए के बदले खरीदी जाने वाली राशि कितनी है;

(ख) विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार का किन-किन योजनाओं के संबंध में उपयोग करने पर विचार किया जा रहा है; और

(ग) क्या यह सच है कि भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक केवल अनुमोदित विदेशी प्रतिभूतियों में ही विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार का उपयोग कर सकता है?

वित्त मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री एम०पी० वीरेन्द्र कुमार): (क) मार्च, 1997 के अंत में भारत का विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार (सोने तथा विशेष आहरण अधिकारों को छोड़कर) 22367 मिलियन अमरीकी डालर था जो 1996-97 के दौरान 5323 मिलियन अमरीकी डालर की वृद्धि दर्शाता है। यह वृद्धि काफी हद तक भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक द्वारा विदेशी मुद्रा बाजार से किए गए विदेशी मुद्रा के क्रय का परिणाम थी। वित्तीय वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान, विदेशी मुद्रा बाजार के हाजिर वायदा और विनिमय खंडों में अमरीकी डालर की निवल खरीद 7800 मिलियन अमरीकी डालर थी।

(ख) और (ग) विदेशी मुद्रा प्रारक्षित भंडारों का प्रबन्ध समग्र वृहत आर्थिक प्रबन्धन का एक अभिन्न भाग है। विदेशी मुद्रा प्रारक्षित भंडारों के नियोजन के पोर्टफोलियों समूह का निर्णय करते समय भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक निवेश की गई निधियों की मौद्रिकता, अर्जन और सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखता है।

जैसाकि भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक अधिनियम, 1934 की धारा 33(6) के तहत निर्धारित किया गया है, भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक विदेशी मुद्रा भंडारों को विदेशी प्रतिभूतियों सहित विभिन्न लिखितों में निवेश कर सकता है।

Transfer policy in Punjab & Sind Bank

4304. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the policy regarding transfer of officers in the grade of Manager/Senior Manager in Punjab & Sind Bank;

(b) whether some officers in the above grades in branches of Punjab & Sind Bank in Garhwal region, particularly Dehradun have been/are proposed to be transferred, even though they have not completed half of the prescribed period regarding their transfer, despite very good performance;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(d) whether some of these officers have requested for not transferring them in

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